

Conversation between Raminder and A

Recorded 12 Oct 2021

Section 1: Introductory remarks

R: You want your name withheld, this actually seems to be a 50:50 split between people who do and people who don't in the responses that I've received, and I'm kind of curious as to why, if have an answer for that?

A: Sure. There are a number of issues, there's quite a lot I may come on to talk about that may be family related, they may be embarrassed if they are identified as a result of that. Equally I've got a lot of people who may see, or read the ultimate transcript or article, film or whatever it turns into who may see that, identify me locally, not realise what my views are. I'm fairly well known to a large number of people in the local area, but they don't necessarily know what my views are, not that I've kept them hidden, but where it's been possible to avoid discussing things, I have. If they were to identify me, that might actually mess up some of my social activities and relationships.

R: I understand. Another reason why I ask actually, is that there does seem to be some stigma in holding these views (A agrees). Of course we all want to be liked and don't want to be disliked.

A: I mean I like to be liked. I've generally been a collaborative sort of guy, I'm certainly not spiky or confrontational. In fact, when I was at work, one of the criticisms aimed at me was that I wasn't confrontational enough, I tried to find common ground wherever I could, and I was working in a sector where actually, confrontation was a fairly large part of the job.

It would be interesting to see whether there is a common denominator among people of a sceptical disposition, but I doubt that there is, I suspect from those I've met and those I've read that some are more confrontational than others, e.g. some are far happier with confrontation, whereas I like to persuade people onto a middle ground if I can.

This is an issue which has become a sort of religious issue, so there isn't really a middle ground. [It's as if] you're either a Catholic or a Protestant and you can't persuade people across to your point of view by dint of reasoned argument, so there's not much point in it.

R: Yeah, further to that I think it's become completely arational.

A: In consequence, most of the people I know within the local area, (A discusses his primary interests and the people he comes into contact with and how it has led to his exclusion from a local club because of his vaccination status.) "The more people [who know I'm unvaccinated], the more I'm going to have to have the same discussion [about vaccination] with all of them, and they will all believe that I am just barking mad."

A: At the moment I'm seen as a sensible, rational, credible human being. I suspect I would lose quite a lot of that, the more widely my views were known. And that's a problem.

R: Yes. I don't think that's a good thing at all.

A: These people [who I'm in contact with] are generally in their 70's, as I am, I'm early 70's, a lot of them are older than me, 70's or 80s so just as the main topic of discussion 30 years ago would have been sex, the main topic of discussion now is health. Everybody's suffering in one way or another, BC, Before Covid. Everybody's concerned about their health, they see that they're moving towards the exit, slowly, some faster than others and so this whole SARS-CoV-2, Covid thing has caught them, hit them exactly where it hurts them, and the idea that they might - irrationally - think that I posed a threat to them, would be something they would find very hard to accept.

R: I also find it interesting because they're going to have to square that off with their interactions with you BC [before COVID], as you say.

A: That's right. And I've got a deep well, I think, of credibility... I was generally thought of as a balanced, sensible rational human being and so I've got that on my side. Certainly those that know of my position, are surprised; they undoubtedly think I've read the situation wrong, but they aren't spitting at me in the street, or refusing to talk to me.

R: Yeah. That's fair enough. (Discussions about the personal details acceptable for release follow.)

Section 2: Personal aspects

R: We'll start with the semi-structured thing.

A: Yes, structure away!

R: So, OK, you've given me a brief background, just by way of the situation regarding [personal] identification, about who you are as a [redacted]. But, how would you describe yourself in your own words?

A: Whoa! There's a big question.

R: I'll explain why I ask it though. It's about the definition of one's sense of self. Is somebody's self strongly defined, or not? I think when people have a stronger sense of self they are much more willing to go against the grain. That's the working hypothesis.

A: I'm not sure that's right is it? I don't know how you would define a strong sense of self, I'm certainly not one that is generally willing to go against the grain; I've had a very comfortable working life that has been comfortable, to an extent, because I have gone along with the existing current...I was an accountant, it was school, university, career in accountancy, looked to leave my professional accountancy firm but thought I should get some commercial experience before I did, so I moved into an area of the firm that gave me commercial experience, which was the investigations and insolvency side, and found nothing better outside, so I did that for 30 years.

R: Oh wow, OK,

A: So I was doing investigations and acting as receiver or administrator of companies when they failed. That involved trying to bring bank and company onto the same page, where the company was capable of survival but bank needed to give a bit and company needed to give a bit, so it tended to create a collaborative process. So that's what I did, and I retired early. It was a reasonably high pressure role and I found myself taking more of a "management seat" rather than an "action seat," so instead of being out on site on day 1 actually running things, I was more organising other people who were doing that; that was fine, but I preferred the day-to-day stuff.

Because I liked the legal aspect of what I was doing, I tended to go round the country advising our local offices on what the new legislation meant, what the latest changes in the law and practice meant and how they should change their own systems to accommodate those. So, I was doing more and more sort of backroom stuff, but in front of our own people, instead of clients.

(R and A talk about agreeableness in A's line of work, R speculates on whether agreeableness is a good thing to have in a business dissolution. A recounts a time where he and his team was able to defuse a situation on their own, where the client had recommended a strong police presence to quell high tensions.)

R: Another point which I think is worth bringing up now, then, as regards people in society, when you are in a given environment and you're looking at a group of people, what is it that you perceive that block of people as? It sounds as though when you want to avoid a police presence, you were sort of respecting their agency, their ability to keep themselves under control under a very vulnerable situation.

A: Yes, but that is without knowing any of those people at all, so this is walking day 1 into a situation. You can't see them as individuals because you don't know them as individuals until you've engaged with them and so I suppose you're right, you do see them as a block of people.

But if I'm talking to a workforce - take cases where you're actually standing up and talking to a workforce of 60, saying "I've been appointed receiver, this is what we're going to do, this is how it's going to work" - I am then in "telling" mode and explaining mode. To that extent I suppose I see them as a block of people because you can't see them as individuals, because you don't know them, but you have to trust that they will understand and accept what you're able to tell them; you have to accept that you're going to be able to deal with any questions they may throw at you in a way that again, isn't going into inflame any passions.

So you get through that difficult first day and then you start running the business under the control of a benign dictator if you like, of a receiver, with the end objective of trying to find a buyer for the business. You may have to shut some parts of it down so you can find a buyer for the rest or whatever, but you have set a strategy and you're trying to drive the strategy forward with the cooperation of people. So there, I'm in "telling mode."

I think I'm better generally in "telling" mode - in "teaching" mode, if you like, which is why I enjoy teaching so much, because I'm in control of my material, I'm in control of the situation.

R: So, I suppose what I'm trying to get at here, is when we look at the public, how does that sort of, apply to the public outside of a work situation? I suppose I should be a bit more clear. I'm kind of thinking back to Jeremy Farrar, in his book "Spike," he says, effectively, "people are this monolithic thing and they must be corralled and marshalled to do the right thing." (A laughs). Is that your perspective, or is that not?

A: In that work situation, I suppose what I've just described is me trying to move them into a direction where we are able to move forward together (A: *I'm starting to sound like a bloody politician here, not my intention at all!*), but we are trying to move towards a common objective.

When I see the public as a whole, being browbeaten and terrified and corralled into doing things without good reason, then that really makes me weep. You walk into the local Tesco, which I do as little as I possibly can, and you see people wearing masks and your heart leaps at seeing 1 out of 50 that aren't wearing masks; that's a desperately sad state of affairs that we've got ourselves into, when you know, because you've done your reading, that the masks are an entirely political symbol of compliance and they don't actually have any beneficial effect on the pandemic. So people have gone along with, they've accepted this political symbol of compliance. Horrendous! Horrendous! Absolutely horrific!

(R Mentions that questions about masking will also come later, since they are a subject of such vicious debate. Not wanting to interrupt flow, he allows A to continue).

A: I was going to say [why masking may be such a contentious issue] is because it is such an outward and visible sign. You can't see the mark of the vaccination on somebody. You can see whether they're wearing a mask or not. I have to say, I was driving along this morning to my local leisure centre and you see young people walking down the street, mostly perfectly normal and then you see a masked person and, I just shout, (in the car, not directly at them) "take it off!"

You know, it is just unnecessary and what are they setting themselves up for in future? What will they next do, that they are asked to do, if they've gone that far?

R: I've got some stories from the weekend, A, we'll get to those, because they did bother me, in a very similar vein.

R: So then, what is your spiritual outlook, because you mention the anguish you experience in seeing people's compliance and seeing the terror and I can very much understand and appreciate that. As you may know, in your conversations with various sceptics from various persuasions in life, there's no solid characterisation of somebody's belief in what is unseen. I'm kind of keen to hear what yours is.

A: OK, you used the word "spiritual." I'm not a religious person at all, so I'm an atheist, I'm not a believer in a spiritual being, I'm not a churchgoer, other than weddings and funerals because that's the way that this society operates. Interestingly, there so seem to be a number of committed Christians on the LockdownSceptics (Toby's site) and the Reddit site.

R: This is very much what I allude to.

A: OK, I'm not one of them, but it interests me to read of their anguish with what the Church has done, and the fact they've been abandoned by their church, effectively, because churches seem to have been as compliant as everybody else in going along with the nonsense; that must really hurt them and so I feel for them, but no, I don't have a spiritual outlook, I just believe in treating people, I suppose if you wanted a general belief, it would be "treat people as you want them to treat you."

R: Yes, very much the sort of natural law type thing.

A: Yeah, natural law type thing. I won't say "never tell lies" because you know, "*does my bum look big in this dress, no it doesn't, you look lovely dear,*" that's a perfectly acceptable lie, but generally, you know, tell the truth, don't be cruel and treat people as you'd want them to treat you, as you'd want to be treated yourself. Yeah, I mean that's a basic set of principles, not that I've ever characterised them, or written them down, but that seems to be how I live my life.

R: No, I think that's reasonable, and actually with the Christian folk among us, I was chatting with some of them, one on a march and one where we last met and I wonder if part of that [why they are opposed to the lockdown ideology] is because they have an imperative, as part of their belief system, to look upon the human being as something beyond biological matter. You know, he or she is within the image of God and one does not treat the image of God as cattle or (inaudible). But yes, your observation is noted.

So, then, what is a human to you? Is it basic biological matter, or is it something beyond that?

A: Well, it's more than just biological matter. I mean there's the whole...it's a set of impressions and it's that person's actions, the impressions that person leaves on you, that's much more than just their physical presence. I gave the address at my brother's funeral a few years ago, he was a teacher and I said "He is still in existence, and he will be for the next 50 years, 60 years because he has left an impression on the 10 to 18 year olds that he was teaching, that they will always remember."

And so to that extent, he is still in some way, not in a spiritual sense but his memory is there and therefore he is still in some way, in existence. That thought gave his widow comfort, that he's still in existence because he's still remembered.

R: I kind of broadly agree actually. I think that's a very good way of putting it. I would actually term it as imprints, almost. So the culmination of one's work, and there was a YouTube video I was watching many years ago, the chap was talking about his father dying and he said "You know what, the one thing that you want to be, is somebody who is missed." At least that way, one made such an impact that their absence is noted.

A: Absolutely.

R: Yeah, OK. As regards funerals and so on, and given that health is the reason we're all here-

A: Well, there's a big question. Is health the reason that we're here, or is it politics? But OK (laughs), let's let that pass!

R: That's in section 3, don't you worry!

A: So funerals and health.

R: Yes, Sickness and death, as you say, we're all trending towards the exit some faster than others, what is your attitude towards your own mortality, the mortality of others around you or, in fact their falling into ill health? What is that? Is that unavoidable?

A: It's unavoidable, the end door is unavoidable, you're on this escalator towards the end door of death. You can do an awful lot to try and make your years as healthy as possible, so I suppose of the things I believe in, if you come back to a belief system, one is a sense of personal responsibility.

So, I don't want to delegate to other people, responsibility for my health, I like to know the risks I'm taking with my health. For example, I drink alcohol, certainly more than the government guidelines, but probably more than I should, although not to excess.

R: Let's be frank, the government guidelines are homeopathic amounts.

A: Yeah. One of the first books I read in this whole thing, [partner] pointed me towards Malcolm Kendrick's "Doctoring Data" which is an outstandingly good book on the use and abuse of statistics by the medical profession and Big Pharma, super book. She's far more awake to this sort of thing than I am, has been for years. Back to my view on health is yeah, personal responsibility. I don't want to live irresponsibly and rely on the NHS to put me back together when I get ill, because I don't want to get ill in the first place.

I'd like to keep a mental acuity for as long as I can, so I can do things to help that, and you're back to the old concept of "mens sana, in corpore sano" aren't you? Healthy mind, healthy body, so I am still playing sport actively, I still play and teach [redacted], to keep the mind going and so, I've got a decent life balance. I eat sensibly because [partner] makes sure I do, we cook our own meals, we don't have any processed stuff, so yeah, I believe death is inevitable, but there's no reason to actually spend *any more time* than that one sentence, thinking about it, to me.

Some people think about their impending mortality, it seems to me, for 5 hours a day, well actually if death is inevitable, that's fine, that's a fact, now let's get on with life. Life is much more important than death while you've got it, so you ought to be able to enjoy it in as good physical and mental health as possible.

R: Yes. I do think that those who think about it [death] to great excess, seem to want to run from such a thing, *incredibly* desperately and in doing so, they forgo the life that they have.

A: Now, I read something, dipped into the Reddit site this morning and somebody in there said "I'm suffering from terminal cancer, incurable, inoperable." But, that wasn't the point of his comment. He then went on to discuss how he was going to continue to live his life. If death is a fact, there's nothing you can do about it, so then it just makes the rest of time more precious, and it's got to be used as well as you possibly can.

Well, that's my view. I'm not suffering from a terminal anything, other than that life is a terminal condition, so there will come a time. In the meantime, I need to extend my spreadsheet of finances to run me through to 100, so at least I've got a target to aim for (!), but if I'm not in decent mental health, I don't want to be around, and so keeping mentally strong is really important.

R: Yes. And after all, as you mentioned, impressions. A person is their impressions. One cannot make impressions if one is not mentally acute.

A: Yeah. And I've seen both sides now. I've seen my own parents both die in very good mental health and so, absolutely sharp as a button to the end, and I have seen my in-laws- my mother-in-law in particular, struggle with Alzheimer's for 7 years and she wasn't a person by the end of it, and I know where I'd rather be. It'll be an interesting debate. We're moving more and more towards debating euthanasia and that's a very difficult topic because obviously it can be abused, and given what the medical profession has done in the past 2 years maybe I wouldn't want to give them the power to euthanise, but I do think... a dog gets to a stage where it has to be put down and you're not allowed to do it to a human and I think that's a concern, but that's a very big, very difficult topic.

Don't know how I strayed into that, except seeing [partner's] mother suffering with life, death could have been a much better ending than there was.

R: So describing your family situation then, you have a brother, deceased, your partner came through the door momentarily, so you know, what is the interaction between your family like and those who you live with?

A: [Redacted personal details of son, daughter and grandchildren]. Relations are very good with all- the immediate family but some of them probably think we have strayed into extreme territory in terms of our attitude to vaccinations in particular, but it's not destroyed the relationship, at all, it's not damaged the relationship.

The relationship's still excellent and those who I have met from [forum], and I've met a number now, I've impressed on all of them as much as I can - because I do get into "telling mode" - that they mustn't let this destroy family relationships.

This'll be over in 20 years. This'll be over in a lot less than 20 years. Family relationships will still have to be around in 20 years. You can't let this, if you can possibly help it, create a situation where in 20 years time you will not be speaking to your brother, or whatever.

I've got surviving brothers, one deceased as said. I'm the oldest which puts me in "telling mode," one of them I can have a sensible discussion with on this, and I have persuaded him that things are not good and that there is a darker agenda at play. Even though he's vaccinated he now regrets it, he lives abroad, he's got to be to have the Freedom Pass to be able to do whatever it is he wants to do.

The others, I don't discuss the topic with, but I know their attitude, which will be strongly pro- the government line. I don't discuss it, because I don't want to destroy the relationship. They are far-flung either within the farther reaches of the UK or abroad. The UK ones I am hoping to see soon. We are trying to do a few road trips while we still can, while we're not locked within an 8 mile radius or whatever the climate change conference is going to bring out.

They are all guys I've got on very well with in the past, it won't destroy the relationship and I hope, no, I'm sure the relationship is strong enough to survive it [the situation], but only if I don't keep prodding the crocodile (laughs).

R: Is that a particularly hard thing to do? I certainly find it quite difficult to keep my mouth zipped (inaudible)

A: I haven't had a lot of conversation with them about it. We have regular emails back and forth, but only about our favourite football team and that's fine, so it keeps us in touch without discussing anything deeper - that's fine. I mean it did cause a little bit of friction a while ago because we were due to go away, for a family golf holiday; it looked as if my stance on vaccination was going to ruin it, because it wasn't going to happen and it was going to be *my* fault. Well, actually it turned out that none of them could have made it anyway, so that didn't become a big bone of contention, but it could have done, it could have done.

But again, they would understand that if I were to sacrifice that [the holiday], I must have fairly strong feelings on the matter (laughs).

R: Right, OK. Much of this coercive regime has been implemented by members for the public acting against themselves. A lot of it is through the fear of ostracism and being singled out.

How do you feel in group situations, and how would you feel, let's say if you weren't invited to a party. The reason why I'm asking that, is, is the desire to be part of a group particularly strong within you?

A: No. No. I'm not a hugely social animal. But, it hurts that as a life member of my [hobby group], I am not allowed to play because they have a rule that you have to be double jabbed to walk through the doors.

Because they want to get people back around the table, most of the members are elderly and vulnerable and they took a view that the lesser of the evils in order to encourage as many people back as possible, was to try to make it as "safe" for people as possible, and if, by saying everyone there will have been vaccinated might encourage people to come back, then I can understand that as the committee's viewpoint.

I've had my say to the committee, but obviously, I understand where they're coming from, I just think they're massively misguided. As more and more information comes out about the waning impact of vaccination, the fact the vaccination doesn't protect you, the more, hopefully, they'll see that the stance is unjustified. But at the moment it's their stance. So that hurts.

But no, we're not big dinner party, drinks party people, though we do now have a regular drinks evening with people from the local Stand in the Park and from local sceptics and it's been great. We've now discovered a whole new coterie of friends, which is fantastic.

R: Absolutely.

A: Yeah. Really good.

(R and A talk about their stand in the park experiences and the pavement placard protests.) A: "The more people see there is a large body of people, the more people are willing to join them and so we've gathered people into that."

(The subject returns to isolation and non isolation, and how various meet-ups have helped.)

A: We've gathered new friends and when we've travelled around the country, we've been to the local stands where we can. We've met [sceptics in various locations]. It's been a good source of comfort for people. I wasn't at last week's [local] stand, but apparently there were a couple who turned up to that saying "I thought we were the only people in [area] that knew what was going on, it's so amazing to find you." They will come along and join our group. They were where we were 6 months ago.

R: Isolated?

A: Isolated. We were isolated 6 months ago aside from the online communication and the family. We were entirely isolated in our views until we discovered people at the local Stand in the Park, so that was difficult. That was March 2021, I think we went to the local stand. We were virtually the first. There were 3 couples there and the same 3 couples turned up 3 weeks running and we thought "this isn't working," so we went down the road to [area].

(Conversation ensures about the different methods of meeting in A's local area, and some overlap between people who we both know) A: "We need hubs, especially as winter comes and standing out, in the cold on a Sunday morning might be more difficult. We need a Stand in the Pub, rather than a Stand in the Park movement."

(Conversation continues about various businesses that have proven disappointing in their compliance.)

R: I think the sting of isolation is something we've all felt, I wrote an article about just this thing about whenever you hear someone you've known and possibly loved espousing for the most totalitarian, coercive evil and at the same time, calling that a good thing. An act of compassion.

A: They believe it. They genuinely believe it. I'm not religious but I imagine this is the Protestant vs. Catholic debate, there are probably others, Sunni vs Shia and all that who both passionately believe what they believe. So, they are unable to accept that the other side can possibly have any rationale to their beliefs, because "they're wrong". It's black and white [for them].

So I don't hold it against these people too much, because they have been trained - I hold it against the people who are doing the training, I hold it against the government and people making public pronouncements, but I don't hold it against Joe public if they believe that I am putting them at risk by not wearing a mask. *That's their genuine belief and they believe they're right to hold that belief.*

R: Hm.

A: They're genuinely believing that they are right and we are wrong. And we are misguided and misled.

R: And what then becomes of personal responsibility from their part? It sounds as though they're delegated-

A: Well, look at it from their point of view, and they're saying well actually, it is a community responsibility, "we have a war, the enemy, back to the second world war, the enemy is the Germans and anybody who is seen as on the side of the Germans, or collaborating with the Germans is my enemy and needs to be punished."

Now unfortunately, because we've talked about the "war against the virus," we've got people thinking along those sort of lines and being encouraged to think that people who may not share their views are in fact *the enemy*.

This whole belligerent approach is because we talked about a war, you know, "we're at war," we never talked about a war against flu but we've been using belligerent type language and politicians are entirely to blame for this. And by politicians, I mean Whitty and Van Tam as well as people elected to office, you know, they're [Whitty, Van Tam] are just playing a political role. Entirely political.

(A discussion follows on R's experience in academia and some of the publication strategies which are often used to artificially inflate a researcher's impact on a field.)

A: I mean some of the stuff that's come out has been really interesting, on the completely bogus articles that are published by scientific journals that are just not reviewed at all. I'm not talking about the mainstream stuff now but there are bogus articles with bogus statistics and in some cases, bogus language. But they are accepted and published by these scientific journals.

There is somebody (and I'm afraid I can't remember the name) who publishes on Toby's site, put an article within the last 3 weeks, certainly, about completely fake scientific articles.

R: I saw that, yes.

A: And the Chinese researchers saying "please don't call us out for this because our job and our livelihood and our being able to pay our mortgage depends on our tenure, and our tenure depends not on what we do, but on what we publish, so if we have nothing to publish, we make it up."

(R Recounts a story during his PhD, where some 1500 single crystal structures submitted to the CCDC from China were found to be totally fabricated. A expresses that the idea of scientific fraud is somewhat new to him.)- "I will have various takeaways from the last 2 years, I say the last 2 years but I mean the last 2 and probably the next 2, and one of them is the extent of fraud and... we'll leave it at fraud within science and the other is the extent that the medical profession seems to have completely forgotten what they're there for. I mean it's no longer a medical profession, it's a medical business, a medical industry, now, rather than a profession. That's a real shame, I haven't spoken to my doctor in years, who's a lovely chap I am sure, I've never needed to see him really, but to have to tell him that I can no longer trust, him, because I can't trust his profession, is, you know, disappointing. "

R: It is, but I think we've had many upsets, collectively, like these. Institutions who we once trusted. So actually, with regards to institutions then, I mean one previously reputable institution I used to tune into was the BBC every morning. I no longer do that, so I'm curious as to how you sort, you get your news and how has that changed over the past couple of years?

A: Well, I used to listen to the BBC, I used to listen to Radio 4, I would shout at the screen or shout at the radio occasionally, but I would still listen to it, almost habitually... We're in England, we listen to Radio 4! And so I was out of sympathy with their whole approach to

the Brexit debate, which despite their pretence of balance was massively one-sided. But the fact they had to keep on pretending they were showing balance by bringing on you know, somebody rational from one side of the debate and then somebody totally irrational from the other of the debate and saying that's balance, was not right. But I still listened to them.

I/We stopped watching BBC news back in March 2020, when it was evident that they were not interested in... that they were trying to frighten us, basically. I'm not a statistician, but I'm an accountant and so I understand numbers, [my partner] understands numbers well, she trained in statistics and so when we looked at graphs being shown that don't help people understand what's going on... this sort of cumulative graph of cases that is always inevitably going to go up, rather than a bar chart of daily cases that would actually show them going up and coming down. You know, it would have been very easy to put together something that was comprehensible and told the story.

So, yeah right from the beginning, the fact that the BBC seemed clearly there to frighten us, meant we stopped looking at it just because we didn't want to be frightened, to start with.

R: And the website was indeed very apocalyptic itself.

A: Right. I do have the BBC app on my phone and I look at it every morning to see whether the world has come to an end or not, because there will be an element of news on there, so I do look at it to see what's happened. I do look at the BBC sports news to see what's happened to the football results, but in terms of analysis and any detailed commentary, I will occasionally look at it to see what the enemy's saying because I've got a strong enough stomach to be able to take that.

So, they did a hit job on Ivermectin a few days ago.

R: I saw that, yes.

A: I read that and thought "that's very interesting." But, if you just relied on that piece you'd think that indeed, Ivermectin was a very bad thing and I had to wait for a little while for the BIRD refutation of it, from the BIRD website. But I can now read that and think "yes, I know what's going on here." And it's clear that they're just being used as, well I don't call them the BBC now, they are now the State Broadcaster.

R: Pravda.

A: Pravda, yes. So when they start coming up with little adverts on childhood heart disease and how common it is, at the time they're rolling out the vaccine to 12-15 year olds it's

quite obvious that they're sensitising people to stories about children suffering heart disease.

And somebody says [in regards to what may be vaccine induced myocarditis]: "Oh yeah, I've heard that on the BBC, it happens a lot, you know, nothing to do with the jab, there's a lot of it about." Well, they're just doing the state's bidding. The lack of investigative journalism and the abuse of language (laughs) and the fact checkers. I mean it's become so... George Orwell would be proud of 1984, because this, it has just become the Ministry of Truth.

R: And actually, the Ministry of Truth was modelled on the BBC in the writing of 1984.

A: Yes it was. And he worked there, didn't he? And the fact checkers are perfect and things are memory holed, which is perfect and things like Wikipedia rewriting the history of Bob Malone and the history of the discovery of the mRNA technology, for the mRNA vaccinations, all that sort of stuff is just 1984 *to the life, absolutely*. So, well done George Orwell, I've re-read 1984 and Brave New World and both of these are in here (laughs).

Sorry, attitude to the BBC: I do look at it on the app, but as I keep saying to people, it's very sad that we now in the UK have to look to Russia Today to provide us with truth about what's going on whereas in 1970's, the communist East had to look to the BBC to learn what was going on because they couldn't trust their own broadcasters. Russia Today is now a very interesting source of balance.

(R agrees with A about some journalists writing for Russia Today, and gives further detail on the Ivermectin article and its failure to mention a living review, which once an erroneous piece of information had been found, excluded the offending piece of information from the overall analysis.)

R: So you're looking at Russia Today, UKColumn-

A: No, I have occasionally looked at Russia Today. I've particularly looked at Russia Today, RUPTLY TV - for coverage of the demos, that's been excellent. But no, in terms of news sources, the local Stand in the Park WhatsApp group gives me snippets of videos I look at that to know what's going on locally, [a Telegram group], which is a lot more ranty and a lot more off the wall, [a subreddit] and LockdownSceptics. LockdownSceptics is still a good source of articles.

I used to go to it for the below the line comments and I now go to Reddit for those, and Reddit is a good source of information. And then UKColumn, I go to occasionally but only usually when something is linked there. I've also been reading, yeah. "They Thought They Were Free," the [Milton Mayer] book written in the 50's on 1930's Germany (R: Same here), very interesting (R: Terrifying). And then I'm working my way through, ever so slowly, Iain Davis' "Pseudopandemic." I actually got "The New Normal," Klaus Schwab book to see what they were saying.

R: Oh, "The Great Reset."

A: Yes, "Covid-19 – The Great Reset." But, I'm struggling with that. I mean, I've got a strong stomach, so I can read it, it's worth reading to see what they say, but I certainly have read some of the World Economic Forum papers, particularly on Digital ID, papers that they wrote some good time ago now, about how Digital ID was actually being inserted in various places around not only Europe but , West Africa and India as well. There was a good article on that.

In terms of news sources, yeah, BBC for actual non-Covid news, to see what's going on in the world but I never watch BBC News because you can't turn it off. At least with the App I can decide what to look at and what not to.

Toby's site was a godsend, because when we were completely isolated, we found Toby's site through an article he wrote in the Telegraph. I was just looking, we went onto it [the site], 1st May 2020, so I don't know when the site was set up, but were reasonably early adopters. And that was brilliant. And then I started keeping detailed logs of statistics that I've just stopped doing now, because there are too many statistical pieces of evidence that we are right! (laughs), and I've stopped doing it.

I do keep stats on the vaccine deaths, the yellow card reports and on the healthy "with Covid" deaths, which are still, the deaths in England, in hospital of people without comorbidities, which total, what are we now, over the last 18-20 months, still total under 800 I think [Ed: A wishes to issue a correction here].

R: Wow.

A: Under 60's. Under 60's, in good health, died with Covid and that still means "run over by a tram," but tested positive in hospital, and I think it's under 800 [see correction]. And the vaccine deaths, I was tracking the vaccine deaths through June, July, August, when you actually started getting decent statistics, because they lost a lot of the early vaccine deaths in care homes, didn't get recorded obviously on the Yellow Card scheme. But, you were getting 20-25 a week through June, July and August and you were getting Covid deaths of otherwise healthy of 5-10 a week. Now that ain't right.

[I] wrote to the local MP just to say “look, for God’s sake, it’s easy! I was an auditor in my very early days. It’s easy to just pick a week of Yellow Card Reports. Pick a week in July. 25 deaths in that week.” And of course they have the normal bullshit of “most of these were elderly infirm and all the deaths were coincidental because there are people who die the week they have the vaccine of other things.” I said “just pick a week, look at the Yellow Card reports in that week because obviously if someone’s taken the trouble to file a report, whether it’s GP or relative, they’ve taken the trouble to file it because they *know* that it’s related to the vaccine. You wouldn’t file it [otherwise].” And doctors are very reluctant to file Yellow Card reports because they’re pro-vax.

(R discusses some of the stories he has heard about the reluctance to file Yellow card reports simply because of the time they take to file. A then talks about some of the stories reports about coercion to stop filling in VAERS reports, the USA equivalent of the Yellow Card. A talks about how his MP no longer responds to his letters requesting audit, suggesting that the figures would not stand up to an independent audit) A: “People aren’t doing it [VAERS] in the States because it’s a balls-achingly complicated form to fill in, and yet, there are still 25 deaths [a week] in the UK. It’s down now, but there were 25 in the months June-August, from people who had taken the trouble to log a report.”

A: In terms of vaccination, I know that’s one of your areas, it does at least show that there’s another side to the scales, that the scales aren’t entirely one-sided on “the vaccines are safe and effective and necessary and you must take them as your civic duty,” which is the general argument being put out, so I’m not being a good citizen by not taking them. Well, there is another side to that argument, now, which is that they are not safe. It’s also becoming increasingly clear they’re not effective because 75% of the people going into intensive care and 75% of the deaths, certainly in the over 50’s are of fully vaccinated people. And so a lot more of the deaths will be of what I call “vaccinated people,” because they define fully vaccinated as you’ve gotta survive 14 days after your vax -

R: It’s quite a tight definition, isn’t it.

A: And my question would be, if you present to hospital within the 14 days, with an injury, caused by the vaccine and subsequently die with a positive Covid test, because you presented to hospital on day 13, your hospital record will show that you are not vaccinated. Do they change that hospital record on day 15 to say you are vaccinated? This is now a Covid death of a vaccinated person. I’ll bet they don’t! (R: Course not!). I’ll bet that, that gets counted as an unvaccinated death, in which case it’s a lot more than 75% of the people dying and in intensive care who are vaccinated.

So, they’re not safe, as evidenced by the Government’s own weekly reports, they’re not effective, and they’re not necessary, if you look at the small number of people, otherwise healthy, who are dying with Covid. So they’re not safe, they’re not effective, they’re not necessary, what more reason do I need not to have it? But I wouldn’t even begin having that debate with anybody because they won’t be able to accept it. The eyes will glaze over.

So I actually haven't debated this much with people. To maintain decent relations you avoid the subject.

R: Which is again, something of a tragedy in itself.

A: It is a tragedy in itself, but I'm not a confrontational sort of person. It's interesting- I categorised this to [my partner] as the difference between walking into a drinks do, either at [local pub], or on a Friday night with other local sceptics, you *know* that you can discuss any topic. Walking into a meeting or going in to see friends who don't know your views and you don't know their views, there are subjects you need to be wary of. So for example we go down to see [partner's] family, I'm not sure they know quite the extent of our views, that's fine, we're meeting family it's great, how are the children, how are the grand kids, how's the cricket going, this that and the other, but you know there are topics that you know you don't want to get into because otherwise you'll start an argument.

And OK. It's disappointing, but it's the secret of a good dinner party isn't it? Never discuss politics or religion, well this is the same thing.

R: Yes, certainly so. So before we move onto section 2 then-

(A expresses surprise we're still on section 1 and kindly offers R refreshments)

R: So I'm a bit curious about your recording of the stats. Why did you start doing that?

A: Why did I start, or stop?

R: Why'd you start.

A: Because I wanted to find out what was going on, I suppose. I'm trying to think... it's so long ago, there's been an awful lot happened in the last 18 months... I'm trying to think what I was recording in the early days... I was trying to record, I think from quite early on, the hospitalisations and deaths.

R: The old standard metrics.

A: Nothing other than that, it was just that it was clear, I can't put dates on this but it was clear that we were being completely bamboozled, again this is the use of language which worries me, we were being bamboozled by the rebranding of the term "cases." Most people used to know what a case of illness was.

Cases were when you actually had something wrong with you and quite possibly were ill enough to have to go to hospital. And so, when we started calling everything that had a positive PCR test a "case," I tried to get some stats on hospitalisations and deaths to try and see what personal risk I was at. I'm over 70, but only just, so I like to think of myself as a reasonably healthy 60-70 year old. What was the personal risk for me of taking a relaxed view of SARS-CoV-2 and the possibility of catching Covid-19 or succumbing to Covid-19. And it was clear that the risk was low. It wasn't zero and I can't give you a percentage on it, but it was low enough for me not to change my life for.

I went down quite badly with flu 3 or 4 years ago, I had double pneumonia in my youth, early 20's, so my lungs are not as good as they ought to be but I can still manage 40 minutes of high-intensity sport without a problem, so they aren't that shot. So you know, I'm potentially at some risk and so personally, from a selfish point of view, what risk do I actually face and what risk does [partner], slightly younger than me in extremely good health, what risk does she face, because I didn't trust the doom and gloom that I was being given.

And again, helped by Toby's site, but even before that, helped by people like Michael Levitt who seems to have disappeared off the scene, but Michael Levitt was excellent on how viruses wax and wane, how there's a 70 day period where they.... What was it, Gompertz curve! I'd learnt about Gompertz curves!

And so Michael Levitt and one or two others, whose names I forget, were excellent on this and so I could see that this was going to burn itself out and I could see that I was personally at negligible risk. Those were comforting to me, and then I could take a more balanced view on whether what we were doing as a nation made *any* sense at all, or not. It became quite clear that it didn't.

Section 2: Health policy

R: So by way of definition then, um, many of the pieces I've seen which vilify people of our bent, talk about us as "Deniers," "Covid deniers," "lockdown deniers." Clearly, the use of language, manipulation, is, it almost is about the holocaust. So by way of definition, could you tell me what is meant, to you by what Covid is and what a "lockdown" is?

A: Blimey. Firstly, I'm not a "Covid denier" in that I believe that there is a coronavirus, one of a family of coronaviruses although this is an artificially manufactured member of the family

R: Through the gain of function work?

A: Through the gain of function work, *disgraceful* “gain of function”? There’s abuse of language if ever you... gain of function sounds like something for good, rather than something for evil. You’re trying to make the bloody thing more dangerous!

R: But that’s the thing isn’t it. It’s the gain of infective function. It’s a morally agnostic term.

A: OK! Anyway, SARS-CoV-2 is a coronavirus, I’m absolutely not a scientist at all. At all. SARS-CoV-2 is a coronavirus, coronaviruses exist, they have existed for ages, we have coexisted with them, for ages. Covid-19 is, now I will get the language wrong, but Covid-19 is the disease, that if you’ve got SARS-CoV-2 and if it attacks you in a particular way, you succumb to Covid-19. I’ll put it no more scientifically than that. That’s as I understand it. So, I believe that Covid-19 exists, yes, and it is particularly nasty and people are laid low with it.

As Chris Whitty said, right at the beginning “this will affect some people more than others, people are laid low with it, some people may be ill for a few days, some people may even be hospitalised, some people may even be in intensive care and very few may even die.” Well, he was dead right. And the fact that the average age was, what was it, 82, and the average age of death nationally is 81, gave you a pretty clear indication of the sort of people it was attacking, you know, it was carrying off people who were, vulnerable, the frail elderly. And carrying them off in great numbers

R: Yes.

A: And that is a large story that will come out at some stage, I know. And I’m so pleased that both [partner] and my parents had passed away, because if we had elderly relatives in care homes during this crisis, we would be tearing our hair out, I think, because they were locked in their care homes, nobody able to visit them, the audit mechanism to make sure you’re being looked after properly in a care home is familial visits. I mean, there you can see whether your aged parent is doing well or not and you can talk to the care home about it. If there’s no familial visits, then people can be allowed to decline.

(R discusses what may be happening with his own family situation and a similarity he may be seeing between care homes and this. A and R discuss a disappointment with people not deciding what is important, and the denial of individual choice) R: Nobody’s questioning why someone’s wearing a mask when visiting someone who’s Covid recovered.”

R: So then, could you define a “lockdown?” I mean, this is for the sake of completeness more than anything.

A: Define a lockdown... Well, here we are again with the abuse of language and it would be very interesting to look at how 1930's Germany changed the use of language if indeed they did. That doesn't come out of the Mayer book.

A lockdown was something perfectly straightforward back in 2018. If you were a prison and you had a riot, you “locked down” the prisoners in their cells, which means you didn't let them out for their 1 hour or 10 hours of daily exercise or community, you locked them down until you put out the fire basically, until you'd stopped the riot. That was what a lockdown was. I had never heard the term lockdown used for anything else until suddenly, it becomes used for containing the spread of this deadly disease.

So lockdown has been redefined as whatever the government want to call it. So it's either shutting you in your home so you can't leave at all, which was the case with people in care homes for example, or it's shutting you in your home so you can't leave, other than for excuses, subsections A,B,C,D and E, you know, 1 hour's exercise a day, but not 2, essential shopping, so you can buy bread but you can't buy, you know there were all the nonsenses that were going on there and so lockdown as I say it's either actual physical lockdown in your house, or it's restriction of movement, that's still to me a lockdown.

And so, we were in lockdown, Leicester of course was the first to be in local lockdown last summer so Leicester was in lockdown for a very long time; I can see lockdowns being reinstituted but they'll probably rebrand them because they're not allowed to call them lockdowns any more. There will be local restrictions on movement in the winter as hospitals become overwhelmed, i.e. under the normal pressure that UK hospitals are under every winter but more so because they ain't got no staff and they ain't got no beds, so they've got fewer staff and fewer beds than last winter and nobody's going to see their GP's. So they'll [use this pressure to] create local lockdowns but they won't call them lockdowns, they'll call them movement restrictions or something like that.

R: Yes. One of the things that these public health bastards have, losing my professional demeanour, is... they never refer to these things as totalitarian or oppression, or locking down. They call them “measures,” they call them “mitigations.” Underneath the velvet glove is the iron fist.

A: And this will segue, naturally into restrictions on movement in order to save the planet. It'll move into climate change. I'm convinced that taking measures to deal with climate change is one of the end objectives of all this, hence the manic need to vaccinate everything in sight, whether it's valid or not, in order to give you vaccine ID cards in order then to be able to control people's movement or activities in all sorts of other areas. I'm convinced of that.

R: So, do think that's where this is all going, the sort of digital health totalitarianism, direction of travel as it were?

A: Direction of travel. I wouldn't say it was digital *health* totalitarianism. It's digital totalitarianism. So I believe that the government may not have the plans all set out, or the plans may not have been set out for it, I'm not sure about the greater power here, but I'm convinced that the only reason that they can want to push the level of vaccination that they're pushing when it's patently unnecessary and it's patently putting people's lives at risk i.e. vaccinating people who have recovered from Covid, what the hell's the point, vaccinating 12-15 year olds and putting them at risk, what the hell's the point.

The only reason they're doing this is to be able then to create a vaccine ID card. The more they say they won't do it, the more I'm sure they will.

And once you've got the vaccine ID card, you've seen the early drafts of the app, which had on it things like criminal activity and potential criminal activity, so once they've got that it's then very easy - because everybody will get used to showing their papers - it'll be very easy for them to institute movement restrictions in the interests of climate change. "We can't possibly afford to waste this diesel on trips around the country", so you can be stopped and searched, stopped and asked for your papers and if you're outside you're 8 mile radius of your home without good reason you'll be sent home.

I mean, I find it impossible to think that I'm really saying this, but...it's the only logical justification for the government taking such an illogical approach to vaccination, which is nothing to do with public health. So the only logical justification is the move towards ID cards, not as health digital ID, but as digital ID.

And then you trash the currency and create digital currency and then you're in China. You're under a Chinese system. And *why* on earth a UK democracy should think this is a good route to go down, *I have not a clue*. I don't know what's in their heads but I can't see any other logical conclusion than that as an endgame.

If somebody can come up with a logical conclusion, that would be nice but I can't see it. And the trashing of the currency, I mean I'm not an economist, I'm an accountant and they're very different animals, but I cannot see the way out of the financial conundrum that we're in, with inflation starting to then increase the cost of borrowing which we can't afford anyway and so we will finish up with more inflation because the pound becomes valued lower, and so we get into an inflationary spiral.

Some economists are trying to persuade me that actually that's not gonna happen and that we'll be into deflation but the way I see it, I can see it's getting into an out of control inflationary spiral, in which case, then fiat currency comes to an end and some form of digital currency comes in.

It's probably going to take so long to happen, it'll be beyond my lifespan, but I can see it as the direction of travel, unless somebody stops it, and nobody's stopping it at the moment.

R: That was the follow-up, which is... you laid out the direction of travel. What do you think the end points might be? Will we end up like China? Will we end up in a better place than we were before? Who knows? (Ed. On listening to the original audio, I can see how my intonation may have led A to respond in the way that he did.)

A: I don't see how having everybody trackable and traceable through digital ID, that can demand of somebody that they show their papers at the whim of an official can be a better place. I mean, I just see the loss of personal liberty and personal control over your own life as being, I can't see of a reason that would make that a better place to be rather than a worse place to be. Just can't see it.

If we go back to lockdowns, the thing that hit me as an accountant was the eye-watering amounts of money that is being spent. You know, we used to run an economy based on the fact that you'd have to fight for every bit of your budget and defence would get something only if the NHS didn't, that sort of thing. Now, they just produce money out of thin air. £400 billion and counting as the cost of lockdowns, furlough, whatever, with an economy that is not yet back on its feet, with a labour force that has forgotten, to some extent, been sensitised to the fact that you don't need to work, the state will look after you to a large extent, quite easy then to introduce Universal Basic Income.

None of this is affordable in a UK that's run on a balance sheet that balances, or a profit/loss account that breaks even. And so I can see the trashing of the currency, in which case a digital currency could be replacing it and that's certainly been mooted.

The only hope I've got, is that governments are generally far too incompetent to carry this through. But I'm afraid that we still may finish up with the trashing of the economy, competent or incompetent and so whether they can follow it through with a digital currency that works, whether there will be enough people that operate a parallel society, or are able to operate a parallel society, I don't know, [as] I say, I won't be around to see it. It'll take a good, long time.

I mean Germany, to move from where they did to where they got to in 1933 to 1940, that's 7 year, you know, that's a long timeframe as the frog was gently being boiled, and timeframes accelerate at the moment, but I just can't see... I think this has caught governments on the hop, if this was planned, with some overarching plan, Great Reset, World Economic Forum-type plan, and I'm not yet convinced that it is, but I'm probably unique among our Stand in the Park group in not being convinced.

If it was set up as some great overarching plan, then I think Covid has caught them on the hop and they've leapt on it as an opportunity to do things, but they're not actually ready. They're not ready to put the mechanisms in place to control us in the way they want.

R: For better, I would say.

A: Yeah. Absolutely. And the longer they take, I keep telling people that the UK's in a very good position, you compare us to France, you compare us to Italy where your vax pass is required now to work.

A friend was telling me about a contact who he had in Italy who was a market gardener in a small way, that's his living, and he sells his produce in the local market, he's not allowed to sell it in the local market without a green pass, which he doesn't have, because he won't be vaxxed because his wife has health problems that the vaccine will accelerate, but that's no exemption allowed. And so they are known in their small community as unvaccinated, they're not able to sell their produce so they're not able to have an income and they are ostracised and spat at in the street.

R: Spat at?

A: Yeah. So I'm told

R: Good God. (A: in Italy). Good. God.

A: France generally takes a more relaxed approach to this, but yeah, because it's a small rural community and people have been sensitised to... what would you do to somebody who sympathised with the Germans in 1940 and you were in the UK? You may well spit at them in the street, I don't know. I was told this in good faith, you imagine being in a position like that, really unthinkable.

This is because we are being demonised because, back to where we were earlier, it is being treated as a war and a war against a virus and "if only we all do the right thing we will win this war against the virus." Well, viruses do what viruses do and what we do is going to have remarkably little effect as evidence by trial after trial, country after country.

The vaccination program has bought nothing but ruin and destruction to country after country if you look at the chart of COVID deaths pre-vax and post vax in a lot of small territories. Horrific.

R: You've talked about the war messaging, that's been a bit of a thread through this conversation, so... first of, what impact do you think there's been, other than those you've already mentioned, you know, the spitting at in the street, the muzzling of the Tesco's customers, erm, generally, how do you feel in general it's been handled? Is it malice, incompetence, is it a combination of the 2, and what would you have done differently?

A: Handled by the government?

R: The messaging, specifically.

A: How has the messaging been handled? Well, the messaging seemed to be at the start that the messaging was driven by a government that thought “we’ll never get people to do what we want them to do, so we’re gonna have to really frighten them.” And SPI-B -

R: “The perceived sense of personal threat?”

A: Yes. The perceived sense of personal threat. SPI-B has an awful lot to answer for. Susan Michie isn’t it and her ilk.

R: Mhm.

A: Yeah. Government didn’t believe that their subjects, we are now not citizens, we are their subjects, they didn’t believe their subjects’d do what they wanted them to do, so they had to ramp up the fear. And in ramping up the fear they did a bloody good job, so they terrified people. Laura Dodsworth’s book is fairly good on this, it didn’t tell sceptics anything they didn’t know, but I did give it to somebody else to read recently and I haven’t had it back yet so hopefully he’s reading it.

“A State of Fear [Laura Dodsworth’s book]” showed exactly what the game plan was, which was “we’ll frighten people and once you frighten people, you can get them to do things, especially if you frighten them about their health.” And so the government’s messaging has been throughout this, *not* to say “Keep Calm and Carry On,” which used to be the British spirit, not to say, I quoted bits from the Health Minister back in the Hong Kong Flu of 1950-whatever it was, where the health minister is quoted in Hansard as basically saying “Just calm down,” and people were saying “Aren’t you going to take measures like this that and the other?” He said “No, that would be ridiculous, it would be totally disproportionate.”

So, the messaging has been to try and get everybody to stay at home, because they believed they would stop the spread of the virus. That was genuinely the government’s belief. May actually have worked, who knows. So that was the 3 weeks to flatten the curve, yeah. In doing it, they killed vast numbers of people because again, the government isn’t very good at execution. So in the execution of this, they said “we must free up the hospitals,” and in freeing up the hospitals they threw a lot of people back into care homes and then abandoned them, so a lot of people took COVID into care homes and [the government then isolated] them and killed them, hence the massive first wave of deaths in care homes.

The messaging, to an extent, it’s followed that thread. It’s followed the thread of requiring people to be scared by overemphasising the threat of the virus to every individual, rather than by saying “this only affects the frail and the vulnerable,” rather than going along a

Great Barrington Declaration style route of saying “let’s protect the people who are affected by the virus, let’s take particular care over the elderly and the vulnerable, you know, in care homes, let’s actually stop people going from one care home to another, these staff transfers that have bringing virus into homes, let’s take special measures to deal with care homes, but let’s not do anything else to the general population because the general population ain’t much of a problem.” That’s what I would have done differently if I had been running it.

But in terms of messaging, the general view has been to frighten people because that’s the way of getting the government message across.

R: Mm. An afraid population is a compliant population, as Milton Mayer would tell us.

A: Yes, a frightened population is a compliant population. Absolutely. And they’ve done it brilliantly. They’ve played a blinder. SPI-B will probably all be getting knighthoods. It was always going to be very difficult for them (sighs), then once it was all over, back in June-July last year and the hospitalisations and deaths were coming down to negligible levels, *then* they bought in masking! Having not done it to date, bought in masking in theory to make people feel more comfortable, to go out and spend money to resurrect the economy.

R: Which was in Hansard. Matt Hancock did actually say that that was the purpose in Hansard.

A: Absolutely, the purpose of masking is to help people to go out there and what was it?

R: It was to increase consumer confidence.

A: Yes, what was Rishi Sunak’s thing?

R: Eat out to Help out.

A: Eat out to Help out, OK. That was the purpose of masking. And of course all that masking did was *remind* everybody- every time we went down to the [local] market you’d see a lot of people in masks, reminded everybody there’s a deadly pandemic about. So it’s the government saying “go out, it’s perfectly safe,” and all around you, you see people wearing masks, which is not a British thing to do.

Maybe OK in China although there's a lot of misinformation about the Far East's use of masks on a regular basis, but maybe OK in China but we don't do it here and fact the that we're doing it here reminds people there's a deadly pandemic.

R: Hmm.

A: Then you get "just wait till vaccination, it'll all be over so we've got to keep you under control till vaccination." And then you've got the next wave of deaths post vaccination. Huge wave of deaths in care homes, that's when I started keeping stats again on the care home deaths of COVID or "with COVID" in care homes immediately after vaccination, uh in December, January, February.

Pre-December the deaths were running at about 300 a week, it went 300, 600, 900, 1200, 1500, 1800. It topped 2000 as the vaccination programme rolled around the country in care homes, and then declined.

But, those deaths were not... they were associated with the vaccine and that doesn't come up on the yellow card scheme or anything like that.

R: No. After all, the vaccine's safe and effective.

A: After all, the vaccine is safe and effective. Yeah. So in terms of how I would have done the messaging differently, if I wanted to frighten the population, I wouldn't have done anything differently. If I'd wanted to take a different approach to dealing with the outbreak, then I would have messaged very differently, but given the government strategy of "you've gotta frighten people to make them do what we want," then the messaging was brilliant.

R: What did you think about other people's response to the sort of measures and the messaging around those, because you know, I find it quite difficult to [be sympathetic towards them]... we've talked about you being a bit more forgiving about -

A: Yeah,yeah. I am. I'm a forgiving sort of chap. They've been frightened to death. People have been scared. People have been made scared. I've known people be made scared and as a result it's damaged their health. Not just damaged their health because they're in a permanent state of fear which isn't good for your health, but physically damaged their health because they've not gone outside because they're acting irrationally, I've had an academic, retired, come in here for a meeting of trustees of a small charity I'm on and her first question was "have you sanitised the chairs?"

R: What?!

A: And this is a perfectly rational person. We had 6 of these chairs round a big table. "have you sanitised the chairs that we are going to be sitting on?" And so you've got perfectly rational people taking irrational views, ...effectively people are not taking any personal responsibility for their own actions because they had subcontracted that to the government and the NHS.

R: That's very much the line I would use. I think it's almost like healthcare communism.

A: Yeah, OK, yes. And so even though it became clear that the virus was not transmitted through fomites, whatever they are, i.e. not through surfaces, people were still madly sanitising, I mean you saw *insane* sanitising. So people were still sanitising surfaces, people were still er, dipping their shopping in bleach and leaving it for 3 days, it just got, when they write the book about this people will look back on themselves and I hope will look back in absolute horror at they've done.

But you don't blame them, because the government, who they've always trusted especially in a time of crisis you know, what do you do in a time of crisis? Thinking for yourself in a time of crisis is not necessarily a good attribute, if you are a government official. You don't want people thinking for themselves.

If I were to go back to my benign dictatorship as a receiver, I know the route I want this case to take. I don't want a small coterie of people within, saying "no, we're going to do something different." I've got to drive the process. And so if I am a government hellbent on going down a particular route then I need to get people to cooperate with me. If frightening them is the way to do it, then frighten them I will, and they've just gone down the wrong route.

R: So then, um -

A: So yeah, I don't blame individuals.

R: OK, OK. So, it sounds as though your opposition to lockdowns and vaccine passports is in part because they are an abdication of personal responsibility. Mechanistically, they may not even work. Is that a fair statement to make?

A: Yeah, absolutely. Lockdowns: OK, you're back to "is it safe, is it effective, is it necessary." Now on lockdowns, [I] haven't thought this through yet, so we may get rambling but on lockdowns, are they safe? No they're not. They're very damaging for the economy as a whole, they're damaging for individuals in the economy and the mental

health of those individuals, back to personal stories, we had the breakup of one relationship in the family, virtually in the first week of lockdown, we had a house move in the first week of lockdown, we had another house move in the second week of lockdown, of family members, all of which was just tensions heightened by the fact that we were probably breaking the law in doing what we were doing, but it was essential for people's mental wellbeing, so no, are lockdowns safe? They're not safe for the wider economy, they're not safe for the mental health of the individuals who are doing it, so there needs to be a bloody good reason for them.

OK. Are they effective in stopping the spread of the virus? Well that comes down to do you actually want to stop the spread of the virus? And you ought to want the virus to be spread as far and as fast as possible among people who are not at risk from it, I think. So you're back to herd immunity, which I'm not a scientist, so again people are playing with words they've apparently redefined herd immunity but as I understand it, it's the more people who get this and get over it, the fewer people the virus has got to attack within the community.

R: Pretty much.

A: So, I thought people should basically, get this flu because for most people it was, get it, get over it, get on with it was my mantra at the beginning. And so, you know, have this, have a few days off work, get well, go back to work and so lockdown wasn't effective in stopping the spread of the virus. Well, it wasn't effective in stopping the spread of the virus, probably wasn't effective in stopping the spread of the virus among the vulnerable, because sorry, a national lockdown of everything wasn't probably effective in stopping the virus spread among the vulnerable because you could have locked down care homes and had treatments in hospital and treated that sector, which is a small part of the economy as an entirely separate animal and let everybody else get on with it.

R: Very Great Barrington-type

A: Very Great Barrington-type. Absolutely. (Laughs), so OK. Are they safe, are they effective then are they necessary? Well, you need a very good reason to throw out all the calmly planned approaches to dealing with a pandemic, which we had in the locker. Yeah, we had an approach to dealing with a pandemic. We had various operations or trial runs or whatever and there was a pandemic game-plan as recently as I think, 2018. And the UK and Sweden were the 2 countries that were following the game plan until mid-March and then we bottled it. We just lost it, and so we tore up the game plan and did something totally different.

Now, was it necessary to tear up the game plan and do something totally different? Were we seeing a situation which made that necessary? I don't believe we were. But had I been in number 10 at the time and apparently... I still believe Johnson is, well he was, I think he's a different man now, he was reasonably libertarian in his outlook and so I believe that

lockdowns were very much sort of an “over my dead body” approach, but he also wanted to be popular and so he didn’t want to see lots of people dying.

So are lockdowns safe and effective and necessary? No. There was another way of doing it and hundreds of thousands of people have pointed this out, but too late now. We are where we are. That’s the other problem. We’ve been going down a cul-de-sac for 18 months and there’s no way that the government can afford a U-turn, so you’ve got to carry on going down and down and down this cul-de-sac, he [Johnson?] is hoping that it leads to the main road, but if it leads to a brick wall at the other end then, you know, that’s a problem.

R: OK, let’s see. Your experience of the lockdown measures then, how disrupted was your life, I guess.

A: I’m retired (A moves to shut the curtains), I mean personally, little disrupted really apart from the fact that it’s created family disruption.

(Redacted details covering: breakdown of a family relationship; difficult pregnancy and birth issues in lockdown; house moves that breached the regulations; lack of effective support for mental health issues in the wider family; job losses for children; complex access issues for grandchildren.)

A: With our own activities, [partner] has a social activity that she is unable to rejoin being unvaccinated, so lockdown hasn’t affected us nearly as much as the unvaccinated status.

Again once [our joint hobby] was able to reopen, our unvaccinated status meant we’re not allowed into it. So that cuts out an important social activity. [Partner] and I can still play sports—but again it’s difficult...she has a regular sports group of ladies in their 70’s, they would be shocked and horrified to know that she wasn’t vaccinated. They don’t know, and they would be horrified to know... and they might wonder whether they should be consorting with her, I don’t know. So that hasn’t been discussed.

So yeah, lockdown has had less of an impact than the lack of vaccination.

R: OK, OK.

A: Sorry, trying to think of other impacts where they have been. Nah. We’ve got a holiday let property that was not able to be let out for ages, but the government threw money at us to compensate, I mean ludicrously generous amount of money so we’re probably ahead of the game, which is just ridiculous.

No, as I say, lockdown... the most affecting things have been the refusal to wear a mask which obviously highlights you as a dissenter and the unvaccinated status which is becoming an increasing problem for access to things that we want to access. So, we like

to go to the theatre, but I'm not going. I'm not doing a bloody lateral flow test to go to the theatre or showing a passport so, you know, that's out.

R: No. And my view is that art should be open to all.

A: Yes. But "*you gotta keep em safe*"(!) (R sighs). This is again...lockdown per se not so damaging as maskage and vaccination, compulsory vaccination, which is what we have in all but name.

R: OK. And you've managed to navigate the kind of thorns in how this affects your relations by kind of just avoiding the subject?

A: Yes.

R: OK. Fair enough. I mean that's probably not something I would do but people of course are different and-

A: If I broach the subject, problem is I also see people in a group. I've got a group of [a number of people for key interest]. If I broach the subject by saying "by the way, I'm not vaccinated, hope that's alright with you lot," I would have to have of different conversations with each of them as to why. I wouldn't persuade any of them that I was right.

Whether they would be nervous of me as result, I would be creating a problem for them that isn't a problem that's necessary for them to have. Whereas I permanently have to make the judgement as to when somebody finds out in a year's time, that I wasn't vaccinated, are they going to feel betrayed by me for not telling them?

So I have another group that I'm a member of. We've been meeting online, about 8 of us. We normally meet down the pub once a month, we've been meeting online, we *will* go back to meeting in the pub. I find it... - they're again generally in their 70's and 80's - I find it very difficult not to tell them, when we come back to face to face, I would find it very difficult not to tell them that I'm not vaccinated - even though it's not necessary for them to know - because when they do find out, which they will, because this is a small-ish community, when they *do* find out, will they feel that I have misled them, breached their trust in some way by not telling them? By not giving them the opportunity to make a judgement of their own as to whether they felt it was safe to be consorting with me.

So that's a balance I've gotta make in every interaction I have, which is difficult.

R: Naturally.

A: And so, some people I've told, some people I've told because I've had to - I was meant to present the accounts, as treasurer of a society at a meeting that was going to take place in a venue that doesn't allow non-vaccinated people there. So I've said "well, I'm sorry, I'm not going to be able to present the accounts." And I explained why and they said "oh, OK, we'll hold the meeting online instead."

R: and you divulged your-

A: I divulged, I said why. That's a group of people I had to tell because there was a valid reason to tell them. I will only tell people if I believe they need to know, but we are back to this group who I know, don't need to know, but when they find out, will they feel betrayed and will that be a greater betrayal than me not telling them?

R: And yet you seem to have a fairly optimistic view of these people as being merely scared, as opposed to collaborators and sort of stuff. Which I find quite fascinating and quite forgiving.

A: Collaborators in what?!

R: With the emerging sort of nightmare that we see ourselves in, personally -

A: They don't see that!

R: *They* don't see it?

A: No. [In their minds], life's going to get back to how it was in 2019. No no no. They're not collaborators at all. They believed in 3 weeks to flatten the curve, they believed that once we get the vaccine this'll be all over, people have got very malleable memories. So, they've now forgotten that it was only 3 weeks to flatten the curve, they've forgotten that "once we get the vaccine it'll all be over." They believe that once they get the booster, it'll be all over. They'll forget that in a few months until it's "once we get..."

But they don't see this, this is, this is, Mayer's book, these are ordinary German citizens.

R: "A leads to B, leads to C, leads to D."

A: Yeah. Boiling the frog. Until they are asked to set fire to the Synagogue. And we're nowhere near them having to set fire to the Synagogue yet.

R: And when we are, it won't be that big an imposition.

A: No. That's right. Maybe. But they don't see that so they're not collaborating. In *hindsight*, you can see those Germans as collaborating, but only in hindsight, and what else would they have done differently at the time? Would they want to have stood out in their small community by being the one person who didn't say "Heil Hitler?" Would they? No.

So, no they're not collaborators. They are led by the government. They're too easily led, I would say but they've been scared. And once they've been scared, it's easy to lead them.

So the "sheep" analogy, I think is fine. I think is fine. They are being shepherded, and if you've got a good shepherd, shepherding... I mean that's a biblical reference isn't it? The good shepherd. Unfortunately, we don't have a good shepherd in charge, but as far as they're concerned the government's done a wonderful job in a very difficult situation.

(A recounts a conversation with someone who went to the Conservative party conference)

A: "The general view from the conference, and [this person] spoke to a number of people, he said the general view from the spin doctors, or the focus groups or whatever was *"you can do anything you like with the Conservative party, so long as you don't get rid of Johnson as prime minister. You have to keep him as prime minister. He is a massive asset to the party. People love him. The voters love him."* And, so that's what you're dealing with."

A: I also believe, and I've said this a few times in comments on Reddit and to locals, I believe that we have to embrace the vaccinated because otherwise we'll never become the 30% or so that we need to start reaching a tipping point. It's the 30,40, 30 view and you need 30 percent on your side, and if they are seen as a majority, 40 percent will follow the majority. The other 30 percent will never shift, so things will turn difficult.

R: Yes. This is the Matthias Desmet thing isn't it?

A: Yes... Excellent! I don't know who linked me to that, but that was really good. Really enjoyed that. Yes. Mass formation.

(Interlude, R needs to attend to a couple of things)

R: So you talked about embracing the vaccinated. Yes, I agree. There's the mass formation thing certainly, uh and... for any kind of regime change we do need those people, so yes, I'm completely on board with that.

A: Regime change, yes. I have no idea where that come from, regime change. I can't see anything in the wings. People talk about ripping up politics and starting again but that's not feasible. People talk about us infiltrating, is it the SDP? And turning it into our party, but that's not feasible, don't think. So no, I don't see regime change much.

There may be [a change of direction in the] existing regime, as politicians have short, malleable memories. But we do need them [the vaccinated] anyway. We need them on board whatever happens. We need the double vaccinated who see people suffering vaccine injuries and see that the vaccines haven't been working, we need them on our side.

R: No, I agree. And then erm, so, what made you start conspicuously rebelling? Was there a sort of certain kind of "I've had enough" moment? You talked about refusal to wear a mask, which I guess-

A: OK. So refusal to wear a mask, I mean I can't... I was just never gonna wear a mask. So when they came in, I wrote to ah, forget his name now, Lewis. Clive Lewis? Chief exec of Tesco to say "if you insist on me wearing a mask in your shop, I will not darken your doors again until you stop. And I spend a reasonable amount of money with you every month, so."

Anyway, got a nice reply saying "we'll do what the government tell us to to," and I sent another one to our MP saying exactly the same thing basically, saying they're not necessary and they're frightening people. And so not mask-wearing was certainly an overt expression of noncompliance.

And we stopped going into shops. We shop in the local market in [local area] and hopefully will continue to do that, I mean I want now to stop supporting large organisations and support smaller ones basically. So that's changed my easy view of life. My view of life was easy and simple and let's get the weekly shop at Tesco, boom boom boom, job done.

I've never been a political animal at all, but I now think where you shop can be a political statement, which I'd never thought of it as before.

R: Well, the personal is political.

A: Yeah, OK. I'm totally un-political, or have been, but it's impossible now, because politics has started to affect my life, it's impossible not to be. So no, in terms of rebellion, we didn't wear masks from the beginning, I've worn a mask twice - not a mask, I haven't got a mask but I've pulled my jumper up to cover my nose twice; once when I was at a golf club with friends who'd invited me there, to their golf club, and in the pro shop in order to sign in it said "wear a mask" and I didn't want to embarrass them, since they'd invited me. I was sort of like, didn't want to piss in the soup if they'd invited me to their dinner party. So that for 5 minutes and there was another time where I pulled up one to go into a shop somewhere, can't remember why. Ah, anyway, but no, so that was an overt statement but that was just a sign of what I had believed for the previous 3 of 4 months, because that was 23rd July was it, masking came in?

R: 24th, but yeah.

A: 24th, OK. That was an overt statement...then we went to the Stand in the Park when we discovered they were up and running and so that's if you like a subversive group getting together, the underground group getting together and following that, we went down to the April march in London.

So that was our first march in London, because having seen some of the brutality by the TSG in the September Trafalgar Square one, I said "I'm not taking [partner] down into that." But went down to the April march which was just life-enhancing with a couple of others from Reddit and went April, May, June... various and [partner] went down to outside parliament in July and I went down on the July march with her. It was the Trafalgar Square static affair which wasn't a success, I think that was August. And then we couldn't go on the September march by which time the numbers were dwindling.

But by that time you've started to get local initiatives like the pavement protests up and running and so there's much less appetite now, lot of people from [area] used to go on the marches, I think there's much less appetite now to go on the London marches because the belief is they weren't achieving anything. I disagree. I think you need to be able to show numbers to people.

(A talked about his views on the impacts of showing videos of the London marches to other people)- "I believe the opposition [us] is as split and disorganised as ever it was."

(Conversation returns to vaccine mandates)

A: And so everybody will say "I ain't getting vaxxed" but when it comes to a stage of you can't leave your front door without it, then maybe there comes a time when people will look

at the least worse vaccine option, just in order to survive. Because it's foolish being dead. But we're so far from that, it's off my radar completely.

But I can understand people who love their job and need the vaccination to do their job and weigh up that that is the lesser of the two evils, because they're not wedded to the idea that totalitarianism is a bad thing as much as perhaps you are.

R: I think that's a fair statement to make. So then in relation to the state, what was your relation to the state and what does it look like now?

A: It was "get out of my way and I'll stay out of yours." It was, I'm all for small government, I'm not a politician, not a political animal, at all. Always been a small "c" conservative, "don't waste money, stay out of my way, don't tax and spend." Reduce tax and reduce the reach of the state. When I was in business, it was "get out of the way of business, let business carry on as much as it can."

Fair enough to keep them safe, genuinely, so some health and safety legislation is required because you don't want employees losing their hands in unguarded bits of machinery, but you can take it too far as health and safety, the good old examples of health and safety taken too were, once you put somebody in charge of something like that, they create a role and a job for themselves.

So no, I was all for small state, "stay out of my way, I'll stay out of yours," and now we have the state's overreach into every aspect of private life. That's not what I signed up for, so my relationship with the state is completely broken. So, I can't see me voting for any of the major political parties again.

I had to spoil my ballot. I have always voted, had to spoil my ballot at the last [local Council] election by writing "none of the above is fit" and will continue to do that until I find somebody to vote for. Yeah. It saddens me. I'm a citizen. I don't think they're seeing us as citizens as I said earlier. I think they're seeing us as subjects. But I am a citizen and I feel that I ought to vote as part of a democracy, but I also ought to have the right to actively not vote when voting is keeping power somebody who is not acting in the nation's best interest.

So yeah. It's broken. The other thing is what this has proved is that parliamentary democracy doesn't work, the government by fiat, the government by statutory instrument, the lack of debate and the lack of opposition, all of those alongside the censorship of any alternative or opposing views just show to me that there isn't a parliamentary democracy at the moment. The party in power is doing what it wants by issuing pronouncements.

And they're making them sufficiently complicated... again, I tried to work my way through the various tiers in the coronavirus act, tried to make my way through the various bubbles and the various tiers and the various bits of legislation and then I just gave up. And I was quite good at the legal aspect of my job, I can work my way through clause c subsection 7 and see whether it conflicts or not with a previous section in a previous act, but I just got fed up with it. It wore me down.

(R raises that many of these statutes were written in a hurry. R and A discuss many of the U turns occurring.)- A: "It's just been enacted by one person saying "*this is what we will do.*" no discussion, no debate and I'd love to see whether there's any dissent within cabinet at the moment at all about vaccine passports and coerced vaccination."

A: For Javid to say "people who can't be bothered" to get a vaccination. Dismissing them like that when these are people who are going to be fired from the job they probably love doing because they've taken a stand, is disgusting. It really is.

So, yeah relationship [with Government], is broken.

(R and A talk about the coercion they see in the state as it is.) A: "I could tick all the boxes [on a chart of coercion] for what the government is... my relationship with the government, so I'm in an abusive relationship."

(R and A talk about the lack of distinction made between the virus, and our reaction to it. The conversation ends with a coverage of the logistical challenges in transcribing lengthy interviews.)

ENDS